

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1-24. (cancelled).

25. (currently amended) A method for attaching an aluminum weld stud to a substrate, the stud comprising a shank and a head extending along one end of the shank, the method comprising arc welding the head of the stud to the substrate, wherein the stud head comprises aluminum or an aluminum alloy and has a separate layer of a titanium containing material different from the stud head formed on at least a portion of a surface of the head.

26. (previously presented) A method according to claim 25, wherein the titanium containing material is applied to the surface of the stud head by immersing in an acidic solution comprising titanium ions.

27. (previously presented) A method according to claim 26, wherein the acidic solution is chromium free.

28. (previously presented) A method according to claim 26, wherein the acidic solution has a free acid content of between 6.1 and 18.3.

29. (previously presented) A method according to claim 25, wherein the substrate comprises a sheet material.